

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20350-1000

SECNAVINST 5724.3
OP-007
18 April 1986

SECNAV INSTRUCTION 5724.3

From: Secretary of the Navy
To: All Ships and Stations

Subj: INSTRUCTIONS AND POLICY CONCERNING
FLEET HOME TOWN NEWS PROGRAM

Ref: (a) Title 39, U.S. Code 4154 (NOTAL)

- Encl:**
- (1) Authorized Fleet Home Town News Release Form (NAVSO 5724/1, Rev 10-84) (SAMPLE)
 - (2) Fleet Home Town News Center Procedures and Policies
 - (3) Home Town News Submission Letter of Transmittal (SAMPLE)
 - (4) Hold File Procedures with Message (SAMPLE)

1. Purpose. To describe and set forth policies for the Fleet Home Town News Program and to provide instructions and guidance for participation.

2. Cancellation. CHINFOINST 5724.1A

3. Scope. By mutual agreement with the Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code PA) and the Commandant of the Coast Guard, this instruction is also applicable to all Marine Corps and Coast Guard commands, organizations, and activities participating in the Fleet Home Town News (FHTN) program. The tri-service program is administered by the Director, Fleet Home Town News Center (FHTNC) under the direction of the Chief of Information. FHTNC is located at Naval Station, Norfolk, Virginia.

4. Background. The Fleet Home Town News Program provides the most effective and economical production and distribution of information about individual sea service members to their hometown news media. These releases emphasize the accomplishments and activities of the individual and are not intended to publicize routine command activities or overall service programs. Residual benefits for recruiting and retention may accrue from the program through reinforcement of individual pride and morale, even though these benefits are incidental to the intent of the program. The program gives the individual commanding officer and officer-in-charge a proven method of discharging public affairs responsibilities. Every command or unit should submit Fleet Home Town News Release Forms to FHTNC on a regular basis.

5. Mission. To process hometown news stories and pictures received from public affairs offices of Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard commands, and the transmittal

of such stories to appropriate "hometown" newspapers, radio stations, and other media throughout the continental United States; to publish the Sea Services Reporter.

6. Hometown Ties Defined. For purposes of this instruction the term "hometown" refers to the place of residence of the sea service member's immediate next of kin, a spouse's immediate next of kin and, when appropriate, college alumni publication. Other hometown ties could include another blood relative, or an in-law or legal guardian living in a community in the United States or its possessions. Spouses, dependent children or friends are not used for hometown ties. This precludes the possibility of harassment in the event official duties require the service member to be away from individual's residence on a periodic basis.

7. Release of Material Concerning Individuals

a. General. Reference (a) prohibits the use of penalty indicia mail to forward news releases to media unless they have specifically requested such material. Therefore, all hometown news will be forwarded through FHTNC, except as set forth in paragraph 7b, below.

b. Authorized Exceptions

(1) Material prepared by recruit training commands concerning special recruit units may be forwarded directly to the activity for placement in local media, when requested by the recruiting activity which enlisted the unit.

(2) Hometown news material concerning a member of a command whose hometown is in the immediate geographic area (generally within 50 miles) of the command may be placed directly with local media. This provision may also include media in communities where the command maintains direct liaison, such as USS LOS ANGELES (SSN 688) with Los Angeles, California. In the case of the namesake ship program, commands should coordinate through the appropriate Navy Office of Information (NAVINFO).

(3) Hometown news feature material may be provided directly to any news media making requests for information on specific individuals, subject to the instructions of appropriate operational or other higher echelon commanders governing media relations. Normally, such requests will be coordinated with the appropriate service headquarters or NAVINFO prior to release.

8. Action

a. FHTNC will:

(1) Establish and issue the procedures for participation in the Fleet Home Town News Program.

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(2) Maintain regular and direct liaison with individual sea service activities in order to assist with their program participation.

(3) Establish and maintain liaison with the civilian news media and college alumni media to determine:

(a) Which media outlets desire to receive hometown news material (to be surveyed annually), and

(b) The type, format, and scope of material desired.

(4) Maintain direct liaison with the Army/Air Force Home Town News Center on matters of mutual interest.

b. Commanding Officers and Officers-in-Charge at all levels will:

(1) Ensure that their personnel are provided the opportunity and are urged to participate in the program.

(2) Ensure that all submissions to FHTNC be made on the authorized Home Town Release Form, NAVSO 5724/1 (Rev 10-84), S/N 0104-LF-907-2407, (enclosure (1)).

(3) Promptly notify FHTNC of any significant change in the status of an individual for whom a form has been sent to FHTNC for processing. This would include the death, arrest, divorce, change of address of next of kin, or any other significant change of status as indicated on the FHTNC form that could be in error or prove embarrassing to the individual and/or the service were the story to be published as originally intended.

c. Fleet and Commander, type commanders will, by means of a FHTNC periodic statement, monitor the home town news programs within their respective organizations and encourage maximum possible participation.

9. Casualties. "FHTNC NORFOLK VA" must be an information addressee on all casualty messages in accordance with each service's CASREP and/or public affairs policy. In the event of an accident/incident resulting in mass casualties (for purposes of this instruction—15 or more persons), FHTNC will immediately cease any ongoing production of the involved unit/units submission until an accurate and final listing of casualties can be determined. In all cases, it is imperative that FHTNC be promptly advised and updated in order to notify media in the event that stories have already been mailed.

10. FHTNC Procedures and Policies. The unit commander's responsiveness and continuous active support are the primary factors in the effectiveness of the program. Enclosures (2) and (3) are offered as a guide to making the program as simple and error free as possible.

11. Hold Files. Since news value diminishes with age, the use of Hold Files is authorized to avoid mail delays. Complete instructions for the use of Hold Files are contained in enclosure (4). Hold Files are intended for deployed units only.

12. Form. NAVSO 5724/1 (Rev 10-84), S/N 0104-LF-907-2407, is available through normal supply channels per NAVSUP P2002.

JACK A. GARROW
Chief of Information

Distribution:
SNDL Parts 1 and 2
MARCORPS Code A

Commander
Naval Data Automation Command
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Fleet Home Town News Release Form

1. Print in Ink or Type
 2. For Additional Remarks Use Block 23

1 From: Command Address Chief of Information Navy Department Washington, DC 20350-1200 Homeport/Base (not FPO etc.)			2 Command Releasing Authority Print Name: <u>Alfred B. Smith, LCDR, PAO</u> Signature: <u>[Signature]</u> Duty Phone: <u>697-1112</u>			3 RUC/UIC/OPFAC <u>31705</u>		
4 Circle Branch of Service Active - Reserve - Civilian USN - USMC - USCG - USA - USAF			5 Date of Event MM DD YY <u>08/16/86</u>					
6 Rank <u>YNCS</u>	7 Pay Grade <u>E-E</u>	8 Date Entered Service MM-DD-YY <u>05/04/64</u>	9 Date Reported this Command MM-DD-YY <u>07/23/84</u>	10 Sex <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	11 Married <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	12 Social Security Number <u>123-45-6789</u>		
13 Your First M. Last Name <u>Jack A. Jones</u>			Address (Number and Street) <u>6600 Annandale Road</u>			ZIP Code <u>22220</u>		
			City <u>Alexandria</u>			State <u>VA</u>		
Your Living Parents or if Guardians or other Relatives Show Relationship - If Military Include Rank Service								
14 Your Father's First M. Last Name <u>Kenneth A. Jones</u>			Address (Number and Street) <u>6787 Smith Circle</u>			ZIP Code <u>22210</u>		
			City <u>Springfield</u>			State <u>VA</u>		
15 Your Mother's First M. Last Name <u>Jennifer E. Jones</u>			Address (Number and Street) <u>Same as</u>			ZIP Code <u>22210</u>		
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BLK 14			City <u>Springfield</u>		
			State <u>VA</u>					
16 Wife/Husband's First M. Last Name <u>Brenda E. Jones</u>			Address (Number and Street) <u>Same as</u>			ZIP Code <u>22210</u>		
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BLK 14			City <u>Springfield</u>		
			State <u>VA</u>					
17 Wife/Husband's Father's First M. Last Name			Address (Number and Street)			ZIP Code		
			City			State		
18 Wife/Husband's Mother's First M. Last Name			Address (Number and Street)			ZIP Code		
			City			State		
19 High School - Complete Name <u>William Christman</u>			Year Graduated <u>1962</u>	City <u>Independence</u>	State <u>MO</u>	ZIP Code <u>65402</u>		
20 College/University/Complete Name			City	State	Type Degree/ Year	FHTNC Use Only		
21 College/University/Complete Name			City	State	Type Degree/ Year	FHTNC Use Only		
22 Duty to Which Assigned Job Title - If Designated a Plane Captain, etc. - List Type Aircraft, Etc. <u>Director, Administrative Services</u>								
23 Event Check Appropriate Box or List Complete Data's Use extra Paper or attach copy of citation, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Reported <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Promoted to Above Rank <input type="checkbox"/> Meritorious <input type="checkbox"/> Medal Award Attach Copy <input type="checkbox"/> Reenlisted Years <input type="checkbox"/> Retired Years								
24 Privacy Act Statement (see Reverse)			25 I certify that the above information is correct and I have no objection to its publication. Signature: <u>Jack A. Jones</u> Date: <u>8/17/86</u>					
For Reserve Use Only - See Instructions on Back								
26 Company Name			Address (Number and Street)			Position/Years with Company		
			City			State ZIP Code		
27 Company Publication			Address (Number and Street)			FHTNC Use Only		
			City			State ZIP Code		

NAVSO 5724/1 (REV. 10-84)

This form supersedes all previous editions which may not be used

Enclosure (1)

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FHTNC PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

1. General. The key to the success of the program is an accurate Fleet Home Town News Release Form. With the press of time of other duties, this is frequently the toughest obstacle to overcome when administering the FHTN program. Personnel charged with the success of the program are urged to establish a system whereby they are aware of activities and accomplishments of the individuals within their command that lend themselves to exposure through the hometown media. The command's personnel office is an excellent place to start. Forms need not be typed. Handwritten forms are acceptable but must be legible.

2. Content. Hometown news releases are factual stories about individual sea service members. There are two types of FHTN stories: the single story and the roster story. Each utilizes the authorized release form, NAVSO 5724/1 (Rev 10-84) to compile essential biographical data. ZIP codes asked for on the form also provide information necessary to obtain maximum distribution of the story.

a. Single stories cover such topics as promotions, reportings aboard, completion of schools (4 weeks or longer), decorations and awards, special qualifications, reenlistments, assumption of command, retirements, etc.

b. Roster stories apply to all members of the command, as in the case of major exercises or deployments, bootcamp graduations or any operational or special event in which every crewmember of a particular unit participates. They are produced from a series of forms arranged in alphabetical order by last name. A Hold File is basically a type of roster that is mailed to and retained by FHTNC throughout a deployment.

c. Judgment must be exercised to ensure the newsworthiness of events being submitted. Activities of a "routine" nature should be avoided. In questionable cases, it will be necessary for FHTNC to exercise final judgment on a case-by-case basis.

d. Forms marked "do not release" should not be forwarded to FHTNC.

3. Style. Originating commands need not worry about journalistic style in submitting material for release. All that is required is a brief synopsis of the facts. These facts generally should answer the what, when, where and why of the story to be prepared.

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Additional pages may be appended to the forms, along with any other supporting data, such as a copy of the citation, news stories, or a short narrative of the event. Events covered in block 23 of the NAVSO 5724/1 are self-explanatory and need no supporting documentation, except for medal/award stories. (See enclosure (1) of basic instruction.) FHTNC production requirements limit the maximum length of each completed story to one typewritten page.

4. Log Book. Each submitting command should maintain a 90-day log book or index file of each NAVSO 5724/1 mailed to FHTNC or, in the case of a Hold File, a duplicate copy of all of the forms they have sent. The record should show the name and social security number of the individual submitting the form, the news event and the date sent. In the event of a casualty or change in data, FHTNC must have the social security number to trace a story. Information concerning deletions from a Hold File is particularly critical. For example, there is embarrassment when a story appears describing an individual's participation in an exercise when actually they had been discharged months before. More importantly, releasing a story about an individual who "recently visited Singapore," when in fact they were hospitalized or deceased, undoubtedly causes confusion and additional grief to the next of kin.

5. Authorization and Verification. Each submission to FHTNC must be authorized for release and verified for accuracy by the submitting command. Submissions of less than 10 forms must be certified on the form. Enclosure (3) provides a sample letter of transmittal for multiple submissions (10 or more forms). Similar requirements for authorization and verification for release of stories using Hold Files are contained in enclosure (4).

6. Privacy Act. Pertinent biographical and routine identification information solicited on the Fleet Home Town News Release Form is considered "For Official Use Only" and may not be used for any purpose other than creation of hometown news releases. All forms which are not in a "Hold File" status (see enclosure (4)) are destroyed 30 days after release per the Privacy Act. Each sea service member must read the Privacy Act Statement on the back of the Fleet Home Town News Release Form and sign the form in block 25 before it can be processed.

7. Local Duplication of Forms. Only in cases of emergencies will locally duplicated copies of the standard Fleet Home Town News Release Form be accepted. In the event a duplicate copy is

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necessary, a copy of the reverse side (upon which the Privacy Act Statement is printed) must be appended to the basic form. This will verify to FHTNC that the sea service member has, in fact, cited and understands the provisions of the statement when affixing a signature. In the case of multiple submissions (10 or more forms), a cover letter attesting to this fact will suffice.

8. Run and Return. Commands that are not deployed, or for some other reason wish to have forms returned, may mark the NAVSO 5724/1 form "Run and Return." Forms so marked, will be processed, held for 30 days and then returned to the submitting command. This allows units maintaining their hold files between deployments to keep the entire package intact. Caution must be exercised to ensure forms held by units for future use are continually updated before being submitted to FHTNC.

9. Timeliness. Except for submarines, hometown news material should be completed and sent so as to arrive at FHTNC no later than 30 days after a news event occurs. This ensures that the news stories reaching the media are fresh. FHTNC will not process forms received before an event takes place. Due to the unique operational requirements, FHTNC will accept forms from the submarine force up to six months after a date of event or upon return from deployment.

10. ZIP Codes. ZIP codes are the primary "key" in the automated addressing of each release to the service member's hometown media. Subscribing media outlets are filed by the ZIP codes of the area they cover. The ZIP codes provided on the form are then merged with all media servicing that area. Extreme care should be taken to ensure all forms forwarded to FHTNC contain accurate ZIP codes. A misplaced digit or an erroneous entry will result in releases being mailed to the wrong media.

11. Photography. FHTNC welcomes photographs in conjunction with hometown news stories. Submissions should include five clearly identifiable black and white prints (no larger than 2 3/4" X 3 3/4"). Hometown news release photographs generally can be classified as "action" shots or "mug" shots. In either case, the service member must be prominently featured. Only photographs of good quality that meet acceptable grooming standards will be released.

12. Reserve Releases. Hometown releases on sea service members affiliated with their respective reserve components are processed at FHTNC in the same manner as releases on regular active duty members--with two exceptions. Since a reservist is more

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permanently located in a particular community than their active duty counterpart, completion of an address and ZIP code in block 13 of the FHTNC release form will normally result in a release being generated to the media in the reservist's own local area. This would be in addition to the other hometown ties requested on the rest of the form. Provision is also made on the form for a release to be sent to a company publication where the reservist is employed. Again, judgment should be used regarding the newsworthiness of information to be released to both the hometown and company media (see paragraph 2 of this enclosure). Complete company publication addresses, including ZIP codes, are required. Stories pertaining to unit-wide or group activities about reserve members who reside in the same geographic area should be avoided. To do otherwise results in the editors of that particular area being flooded with multiple copies of the same story with only the names of the service members changed. Local release of hometown news material (within 50 mile radius of command) is recommended (see paragraph 7b(2) of basic instruction).

13. Point of Contact. Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard commands will forward Home Town News Center material to:

Director
Fleet Home Town News Center
Naval Station, Building X-18
Norfolk, VA 23511-6698

Phone inquiries should be made directly to the Fleet Liaison Officer or senior Marine Corps or Coast Guard representative. Phone numbers are:

Autovon: 564-2221/4346/2635
FTS: 954-2221/4346/2635
Commercial: (804) 444-2221/4346/2635

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HOME TOWN NEWS SUBMISSION
LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL (SAMPLE)

USS EVERSAIL (FF 5724)
FPO NEW YORK 09501-0001

5724
Code
Date

From: Commanding Officer, USS EVERSAIL (FF 5724)
To: Director, Fleet Home Town News Center

Subj: FORWARDING OF HOME TOWN NEWS MATERIAL

Ref: (a) SECNAVINST 5720.44
(b) OPNAVINST 5724.1B

Encl: (1) NAVSO 5724/1 (Rev 10-84) forms (reporting aboard) (12)
(2) Deletions of Hold File (9)
(3) Promotion Singles (18)
(4) Sailor of Quarter Single

1. Enclosure (1), which is forwarded per references (a) and (b), has been verified for accuracy and is authorized for release.
2. Add enclosure (1) to Hold File after processing.
3. Delete names in enclosure (2) from Hold File.
4. Enclosures (3) and (4) have also been verified for accuracy and are forwarded for release.

J. P. JONES
By direction

Enclosure (3)

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FLEET HOME TOWN NEWS HOLD FILE PROCEDURES WITH MESSAGE (SAMPLE)

1. Definition. A Hold File represents a roster package of NAVSO 5724/1 (Rev 10/84) forms submitted by a unit when it deploys. They are maintained by FHTNC for the length of the deployment, and are normally returned to the command once the deployment is completed. When not deployed, all units should maintain updated roster packages aboard their activities for ease of submission upon deployment.

2. Scope. Any unit departing on an extended deployment (usually two months or longer) should forward a Hold File to FHTNC. For exercises or special operations of shorter duration advance coordination should be made with FHTNC to determine the acceptability of establishing a Hold File for such events consistent with the existing workload at FHTNC.

3. Purpose. The purpose of a Hold File is to provide a rapid means (usually message) of generating timely and newsworthy releases about the accomplishments, achievements, and travels of Sailors, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen, individually or as a group. Hold Files eliminate both mail time lags and the repetitive completion of biographical data forms. At a minimum, each Hold File should generate at least a "departure" and a "return from deployment" story on every member of the unit.

4. Procedures

a. Prior to Deployment. Assemble and submit Hold File to FHTNC.

b. Upon Deployment. Provide FHTNC with proposed "deployment" story, along with authority for FHTNC to make the release, date you want it released, and verification that the Hold File to be used for the release is accurate and up-to-date. Upon receipt of this information, FHTNC will process and distribute "departure" story releases.

c. During Deployment. Periodically advise FHTNC of newsworthy events about individuals (promotions, reenlistments, awards, etc.) or the entire unit (rescue operations, events of international significance, unique port visits, etc.). In turn, FHTNC will generate appropriate releases to hometown media. Again, unit authorization to release and verification of accuracy of the individual forms and/or Hold File is required in each instance.

d. Return from Deployment. Provide FHTNC with proposed "return from deployment" story along with the authority, date, and verification required in paragraph 4b. FHTNC should also be advised of Hold File disposition instructions at this time (return or destroy).

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5. Message Story Content. Units need only submit a synopsis of facts to generate stories. FHTNC is responsible for editorial action. FHTNC frequently tailors and personalizes hometown releases from "master story" input received from senior operational commanders involving several units in the same operation or exercise. Again, however, authorization for release and verification of accuracy is the responsibility of each individual unit. Appendix A provides examples of message inputs for use with Hold File.

6. Updating. Hold Files have a 60-day life cycle. The cycle begins on receipt of the file at FHTNC. At day 50, the unit will be sent a message advising that the file will be returned in 10 days unless updated or its current accuracy is verified. Each time the Hold File is updated, another 60-day cycle begins. The same procedure applies to units permanently homeported overseas with the exception that lack of response to the 50-day message will result in the Hold File being retained in a dormant state at FHTNC until an update is received. FHTNC will pursue follow-up action as appropriate to activate dormant Hold Files.

a. An update is any communication concerning the Hold File. It may be a list of names to be deleted, a list of forms for persons who have reported aboard, or merely a statement that the Hold File is current and accurate. Any of these actions will begin a new 60-day cycle because the Hold File has been verified for accuracy.

b. Casualties. FHTNC must be included as an information addressee on all casualty messages from all Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard commands. This requirement pertains to all units but is of particular importance for those activities that have Hold Files at the Center. See paragraph 9 of the basic instruction.

c. It is strongly recommended that, to ensure accurate updating, participating units maintain a duplicate copy of the Hold File submitted to the Center. Paragraph 4 of enclosure (2) pertains.

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APPENDIX A

SAMPLE MESSAGE TO USE WITH HOLD FILES

FM: USS EVERSAIL
TO: FHTNC NORFOLK VA

UNCLAS //N05720//

SUBJ: DEPLOYMENT STORY

A. MY LTR 00:JPJ:DJ 5724 OF 13 OCT 8X

1. HOLD FILE (HF) SUBMITTED WITH REF A VERIFIED ACCURATE.
2. REQ PROCESS DEPLOYMENT STORY FROM MY HF CONTAINED IN REF A.